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January 29, 2004

The Honorable J. Frederick Motz
United State District Judge
United States District Court
101 W. Lombard Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Re: Cline v. Christy
Civil No. JFM-03-529

Dear Judge Motz:

Defendants will consent to try this case before a magistrate judge as long as it is not Magistrate Judge Paul Grimm.

I would prefer to try the case the week of March 1st. I have a jury trial scheduled March 11th and 12th in the Circuit Court for Allegany County, Grumbine v. Smith. If this case begins March 8th, it may not be finished by March 11th.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

/s/

Lawrence E. Ballantine

LEB/dt

cc: Timothy R. Freel, Esquire
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Elliot N. Lewis, Esquire